

Appl. No. 10/677,061
Amtd. Dated Aug. 20, 2004
Reply to Office Action of May 20, 2004

REMARKS

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Noschese (U.S. 5,389,006) in view of Fusselman et al. (U.S. 6,200,171).

Applicant retains claim 1 unchanged since applicant believes that the two cited references couldn't be combined.

Noschese discloses a connector 14 including a housing 28 and a hood 32. The hood 32 comprises two half sections 52. The bottoms of the half sections 52 sandwich the top of the housing 28 with the hood interlock section 40 being received in the apertures of the housing interlock sections 56 (col. 3, lines 35-38). The hood 32 establishes **an enclosed cavity** over the top of the housing 28. This enclosed cavity allows the conductors 22 of the cable 20 to be **freely** distributed to the holes 28 of the housing 28 (col. 3, lines 40-43). If the hood 32 is molded onto or over the housing 28, it is impossible for the hood 32 to establish the enclosed cavity for allowing the free distribution of the cable 20. Noschese has no possibility of using the Fusselman's molded second member 26 **since Noschese's hood 32 must form enclosed cavity for the freely distribution of the cable 20**. In other words, applying Fusselman et al. to Noschese et al teaches away from Noschese's object.

It is axiomatic that obviousness cannot be established by combining the teaching of the prior art to produce the claimed invention, **absent some teaching, suggestion, or incentive supporting the combination**. Applicant asserts that the combination of the Noschese reference and the Fusselman reference is essentially a hindsight without obviousness basis.

Claims 5-8, 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wagner (U.S. 6,402,552) in view of Kinoshita et al. (U.S. 5,830,001).

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Claims 5, 8-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wagner (U.S. 6,402,552) in view of Hwang (U.S. 6,315,606).

In response to this rejection, applicant has amended independent claims 5 and 8 to define over the cited prior art in this Office Action. Therefore, amended claim 5 should be allowable.

Wagner discloses an electrical connector having a first housing piece 26 retaining a plurality of contacts 22, a second housing piece 38 receiving the first housing piece 26 and a third housing piece 40 overmolding onto rear ends of the first and second housing pieces 26, 38. As shown in Figs. 1 of Wagner, the third housing piece 40 perpendicularly projects from a top wall of the second housing piece 38. It is clear that exterior surfaces of the third housing 40 fail to be coplanar with those of the second housing piece 38. Referring to Fig. 4, the third housing piece 40 rearwardly projects from a rear wall of the second housing piece 38. The front surface of the third housing piece 40 abuts against the rear wall of the second housing piece 38. It is clear that the front surface of the third housing piece 40 fails to coplanar with that of the second housing piece 38. However, claims 5 and 8 of the present invention defines the second housing member cooperating with the first housing member to correspondingly form and share a smooth coplanar exterior surface on each corresponding side of the combined first and second housing member. By contrast, Wagner fails to disclose or teach such features. Therefore, one with skill in the art providing the posts of Kinoshita with Wagner's electrical connector still cannot render obvious the invention as defined in claims 5 and 8.

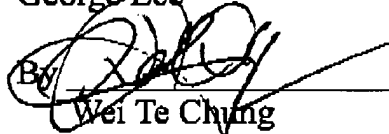
Similarly, modifying the Wagner connector to have Hwang's side posts cannot render obvious the invention as defined in claims 5 and 8.

Claims 6-7 and 9-10 are respectively dependant from claims 5 and 8 and should be allowable.

In view of the above claim amendments and remarks, the subject application is believed to be in a condition for allowance and an action to such effect is

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earnestly solicited.

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